

and that enrollments will increase over time to where they would have been if not for the Web site's issues.

Mr. Speaker, thanks to the Affordable Care Act, millions of Americans can now access affordable health insurance. With a focus on personal responsibility, preventive care, consumer protections, and increased choices, the Affordable Care Act has helped empower Americans to lead healthier lives.

Let's put aside the punditry and focus on the facts.

GOOGLE GLASS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING) for 5 minutes.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share a story about Patrick Jackson.

Patrick is a firefighter from North Carolina who is using new technologies and his programming skills in his mission to save lives. Patrick is using Google Glass, along with the Android and iPhone apps he has developed, to support firefighters on the job. The apps he has created encourage and increase communication between firefighters and emergency responders to accelerate the process of saving victims and putting out fires as quickly as possible.

Although Google Glass is not yet on the market, except for Google's Explorer's program, it has generated a lot of buzz in the tech community. With Glass, people can send and view messages and emails, videos and pictures, and surf the net without using their hands. They can also ask the device for information or get directions without using their hands.

Patrick's Glass app would help firefighters locate incidents and hydrants, and give them hands-free building layouts and the ability to record video from the first responders on the scene. Some departments that have expressed interest in this technology want to take it a step further, such as linking the app to a thermal imaging camera and oxygen masks to increase a firefighter's ability to see in smoke. Although it is still in its preliminary stage of development, technologies like Patrick's could potentially help firefighters and other emergency response teams do their jobs and save lives.

Mr. Speaker, Patrick's idea is a perfect example of how technology betters our lives and can, ultimately, save lives. Innovation leads to job creation. We need to encourage more innovators like Patrick to keep America on top as the world's leader in innovation.

IMMIGRATION REFORM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. GUTIÉRREZ) for 5 minutes.

Mr. GUTIÉRREZ. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday morning, I tweeted out a message to the 30,000 people who follow me on Twitter. The tweet said:

The GOP doesn't determine when the fight for immigration reform ends. We will continue to fight for a bill in 2014 because that is what is right, what is fair, and what is best for the USA.

I sent this because many in the pro-immigration reform community thought they heard Speaker JOHN BOEHNER giving up on immigration reform in 2014. That is not what I heard, but many in the community and in the press heard it that way.

I wanted to make it clear that the immigrant community and the huge movement behind immigration reform—business, clergy, and everyone else—are just not going away. We are not taking "wait," "maybe," and "no" for an answer.

By now, every time Speaker BOEHNER says anything about immigration reform, the press and the pundits go crazy. Even if it isn't clear what exactly the Speaker said, a good percentage of the press runs out and writes obituary number 247 for immigration reform.

What I heard the Speaker say last week was that getting immigration reform passed in the House would be hard.

Tell me about it.

I also heard the Speaker say at his news conference that the House "needs" to get immigration reform done this year, and he is right.

Then I heard the Speaker say that the GOP doesn't trust the President of the United States. Really? Despite 2 million deportations and the lowest rate of illegal immigration in recent decades, the House GOP doesn't believe President Barack Obama will enforce immigration laws.

Well, I have been working on this for a while, and, first of all, you are right. It is hard. For more than a decade, I had to work on my own party to get them behind substantial immigration reform, but the Democrats are ready now—and ready to help you, Mr. Speaker, pass a bill. The movement will help supporters of immigration reform in the House GOP Conference work to convince their members that moving forward to actual legislation is not only the right thing to do from a justice perspective, from a law and order perspective, and from an economic perspective, but the right thing to do from a political perspective.

Mr. Speaker, when you said the House needs to pass a bill, boy, are you right.

Nobody believes the Republican Party can elect anyone for President unless you find some way to neutralize the damage you have done to yourselves with your deportation-only approach to immigration. The immigration issue doesn't just hurt you with Latino voters. It has hurt you with Asian and younger voters, too.

There is simply no math that adds up to 270 electoral votes unless the Republican Party stops getting slaughtered by 30, 40, or 50 points among the largest-, fastest-growing groups of voters

in this country. It gets only worse with each passing day, with another 2,000 Latino citizens turning 18 every day and becoming eligible to vote.

Speaker BOEHNER knows this is the best chance his party has of getting the immigration issue off the table before 2016, and I believe he plans to come back to immigration reform. The cost to the GOP politically is just too high if the GOP-controlled House blocks legislation this year.

You thought the Super Bowl was a blowout last month? Wait until November 2016 if immigration reform is still hanging out there undone. You can tell the babysitter you will be home by 10:30 on election night. The contest will be over early. It will be Democrats in the White House by a landslide.

This notion, Mr. Speaker, that President Obama cannot be trusted to enforce immigration laws just doesn't make any sense to anyone who follows the issue. Every day, day after day, week after week, and year after year, people are being "disappeared" by our immigration enforcement machine. Another 1,100 today—and tomorrow.

Where is the generosity of spirit in that? This lax, liberal, soft-heartedness you seem to imagine, I wish you could tell that to the estimated 5,000 children currently in foster care because their parents are in detention or have already been deported. Tell them how soft Obama is.

I am going out to suburban Washington this evening to talk with immigrants and advocates at Casa de Maryland. I don't expect I will hear very much praise for President Obama's enlightened approach to deportation and detention tonight.

They are not waiting patiently for Speaker BOEHNER or anyone in the Republican Conference to make up their minds about whether or when to start legislating on this matter. I know they are not taking "maybe" or "not now" or "no" for an answer.

Mr. Speaker, you are not going to be spared. Kids will keep showing up to interrupt your breakfast as long as their parents are facing deportation and their communities are being ripped apart.

Mr. Speaker, you can't deport your way out of this. You can't ignore your way out of this. You can't blame Obama for your way out of this. You must act for the good of the country.

AFGHANISTAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Speaker, I am on the House floor today to share with my colleagues several recent headlines from our national papers.

From The Washington Post on January 30:

After billions in U.S. investment, Afghanistan roads are falling apart.

This article goes on to describe the Afghan road network, built with U.S. tax dollars, as a “\$4 billion project that was once a symbol of promise in post-Taliban Afghanistan but is now falling apart.”

Another headline from January 30 from *The New York Times*:

U.S. aid to Afghanistan flows on despite warnings of misuse.

This report informs us that two global firms hired by the United States 3 years ago have found that none of the 16 Afghan ministries can be counted on to keep American aid from being stolen or wasted.

Most recently, this week Reuters published an article titled, “U.S. aid plan seeks to shield Afghanistan from end to war economy,” which details a new initiative from the U.S. Agency for International Development that would spend almost \$300 million to prop up the Afghan economy.

Mr. Speaker, the common factor in these articles is that each describes in alarming detail the absolute waste of American tax dollars overseas. How can we in good conscience tell the American people we are going to continue to send their money to Afghanistan for 10 more years under the Bilateral Strategic Agreement that the United States is currently negotiating with President Karzai?

I hope President Karzai will not sign the agreement. It would be the best thing to happen to the American taxpayer.

Ironically, today or tomorrow we are going to raise the debt ceiling. This is after already raising it by \$230 billion in October of 2013, with \$30 billion reserved for Afghanistan. This is not right or fair to the American people.

We need to stop the insanity in Afghanistan, which could be done if the leaders of the House and Senate would allow Members of both parties to bring bills related to this issue to the floor for a vote.

In addition to the money we are spending, how many more American lives must be lost overseas before Congress decides to act? We cannot continue to waste American money and precious lives in this manner. It is time to end the abuse of the American resources in Afghanistan.

With that, I will ask God to continue to bless our men and women in uniform and their families, and ask God to please continue to bless America.

EXPRESSING MY APPRECIATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. ANDREWS) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ANDREWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise this morning in appreciation.

Next week, I am leaving the Congress to pursue the chance to build a career in the private sector. I wanted to take a few minutes this morning to offer appreciation and thanksgiving for a lot of people who have helped make this wonderful experience possible.

I start with, as in all things in my life, my wife, Camille, and my daughters, Jacquelyn and Josie, without whom nothing good would be possible and through whom all good things are.

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I look forward to many, many more happy years, God willing, with them and thank them for their support and sacrifice.

I thank my staff. Over all of these years, these men and women are overworked, underpaid, and underappreciated, sometimes by their employer. These are true public servants. They are inspirations, and I assure you that I have learned much more from them than I have taught to them.

I want to single out, in particular, in the present staff, our chief of staff, Fran Tagmire; our general counsel, Amanda Caruso; and our legislative director, J.Z. Golden, for their excellence, and for many, many others over many, many years.

I want to thank my colleagues. I thank Speaker BOEHNER for his friendship and leadership.

I especially thank the first woman Speaker of the House of Representatives—in my view the best Speaker of the House of Representatives—NANCY PELOSI, who has taught me strength and principle and doggedness and focus, and whose inspiration will guide me, my daughters, and others’ sons and daughters for many years to come. I thank her profoundly for her influence and service.

I thank all of my colleagues. I want to come back to that in a minute.

I most especially thank the people of the First Congressional District of the State of New Jersey, who have been the best employer one could possibly have for these last 24 years. And, yes, I would include the people who stop us in the supermarket and complain about a vote that we have cast or wonder why we haven’t solved a problem. There are a few of them.

There are many, many more whose words of encouragement have lifted us up for all these years, and I assure you that we appreciate you, and we are staying in our community and looking forward to new ways that we can serve our friends and our neighbors.

I especially, though, do want to come back to the men and women with whom I have had the privilege of serving for all these years. We have done a lot of things that are good together. Some of us have not always agreed on what is good together, but we passed the Affordable Care Act, which I believe will withstand the test of time and will stand together with Medicare and Social Security as pillars of middle class prosperity and American opportunity.

We have opened the door for college students with the direct student loan program that has helped many, many millions of students get an education.

We have improved our environment. In our district at home, there are con-

struction workers building transportation projects today because of our work. There are police and firefighters and teachers on the job because of our cooperation.

There are two veterans health clinics. We can simply not say thank you with our words to our veterans, but by our deeds. And I must say this morning that I especially remember young men and women on duty around the world serving our country, and I express my deepest appreciation to them.

But to my colleagues, I would say this, that I have had 150,000 constituents over the years come to our office with various issues and problems, and they are certainly an inspiration. But so, too, ladies and gentlemen, are you, my colleagues.

The House is a rambunctious and energetic place. I suspect we will see some of that rambunctiousness even later today. We have seen a little bit this morning. People should not confuse debate with division. Healthy, passionate debate is the elixir of American democracy. It is the fuel that makes the country better. And for those who look at the House and say, well, all they ever do is argue with each other, I would certainly hope so. I would certainly hope we would bring to this Chamber deeply held beliefs, deeply held convictions, and express them in the course of debate.

Of course, there is time for compromise, and there is always a season to get the job done; but may this place never lose the strong convictions of people, right and left, Republican and Democrat, north, south, east, and west, because that is what makes democracy go.

I would also say this, that we, in this Chamber, should never confuse a difference of opinion with a difference of intention. I have served here for nearly 24 years, and I can safely say I have never met a fellow Member who does not love this country, who was not here for the purpose of improving this country as he or she sees that improvement. I have certainly disagreed with the definition of “improvement,” but I have never questioned the motivation or motive of any of the men and women with whom I have had the privilege of serving.

So my admonition would be: Keep the energy flowing. Those who misunderstand debate, let them misunderstand it. Keep the passionate beliefs that occupy this place going. And when we do, I believe with great confidence that the institution will continue to lead the way to a country that is more prosperous, more safe, more free, and more generous than any nation in the history of the face of the Earth.

It has been an honor and a privilege to serve. I thank each of you who has given me this privilege.